Met Office

July 2002

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1961-1990.

UK overview

Mean temperatures generally close to average across the whole of the UK. A very wet month across most parts, with some areas receiving three times their normal rainfall.

At Leuchars it was the wettest July since records began in 1922, with 145.8 mm. Temperatures touched 33 °C at Northolt on the 29th, with 83 mm at Marham, Norfolk on the 30th.

England and Wales diary of highlights

Unsettled and chilly first half followed by a warm dry spell, then more changeable. Hot and thundery later with some downpours and local flooding. Fresher closing days.

1st to 12th Unsettled and cool with frequent outbreaks of rain as low-pressure systems and their associated fronts traversed the region. Most days were decidedly wet especially in central and southern areas of England. The rain was often heavy and accompanied by thunder, the latter being reported on the 2nd, 3rd and 5th. Thundery showers also affected a number of places on the 10th to 12th.

13th to 18th A ridge of high pressure extended from the Azores most of the time, bringing mainly dry weather, good sunny periods and very warm conditions at times, especially in the south. There was occasional light rain or showery outbreaks in south-west England on the 13th and in northern parts during the 15th to 17th as weak fronts grazed the area. North-east England had some heavier showers on the 18th.

19th to 25th More changeable during this period with southern areas staying mainly dry apart from the odd outbreak of light rain or drizzle. A small active low crossed central Britain on the 19th to 20th bringing heavy rain at times to the Midlands and northern areas. At Sutton Bonington, Notts, 25 mm fell in 2 hours overnight. A severe hailstorm was observed at Santon Downham on the 20th, while East Anglia, Lincolnshire and east Kent had thundery showers later. Some hill and coastal fog affected south-western parts during the 25th.

26th to 31st After the sun dispersed some early patchy mist or fog, it became very warm or hot for most of the period. Herne Bay in Kent reached 32°C on the 28th, while in East Anglia thunderstorms broke out later, rumbling on into the next morning. On the 29th 33°C was touched at Northolt in Middlesex and 32°C in central London making it the hottest July day in the capital since 1989. Afternoon/evening storms mostly north-west of London drifted towards the Wash overnight. The 30th saw heavy thunderstorms break out widely over the Midlands, northern England, East Anglia and parts of south-east England giving torrential downpours and local flooding in places. Kirklees, West Yorkshire received nearly 50 mm in 4 hours, while Marham in Norfolk caught 83 mm in about 18 hours from two storms ending at 7 a.m. the next morning. The 31st saw early morning storms in Norfolk petering out but more thundery rain with local downpours developed over central southern England during the day, Bicester, Oxon catching 52 mm. Heavy rain arrived in south-west England later.

Scotland diary of highlights

Very wet end to an unsettled month.

The unsettled south-westerly regime that had prevailed since mid-May continued until mid-July, giving mostly showery weather. Thereafter a rise in pressure led to a decrease in rainfall amounts, but there were large amounts of cloud. During the last five days, slow-moving fronts brought heavy rain to most districts.

The first 12 days of July were unsettled, with low pressure close to Scotland. However, winds were light, the rain came mostly in showers, and the sun shone between the showers.

From the 13th to the 26th there was a change in weather type as a rise in pressure took place, culminating on the 18th when an anticyclone was centred over Scotland. It was much drier than before, but weak fronts and humid airmasses ensured that it was mostly cloudy. Thus a continuing theme of the summer was the rarity of dry and sunny days.

During the last five days of July a front marking the boundary between hot air over England and fresher weather to the north and west became slow moving over Scotland. Heavy rain arrived in the north-west on the 27th, but the wettest day was the 30th, when there were many reports of flooding. Fife Ness received 59.4 mm of rain, and Leuchars and Kinloss experienced their wettest July day on record.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

Wet and dull. Unsettled conditions made this a wet and dull July in all areas of the province. Conditions by day were also cool, with daily maximum temperatures below normal in all areas, however by night minimum temperatures proved mild.

1st to 4th Unsettled and cool. Bands of often heavy rain and showers gave daily rainfall totals in double figures in some locations on the 1st and 4th, however little or no precipitation and plentiful sunshine was recorded across the province on the 3rd. The 1st proved one of the coolest days of the month, with daily maximum temperatures struggling to exceed 14°C in many locations.

5th to 12th Sunny conditions gave daily maximum temperatures slightly above average on the 5th, however below-normal temperatures then returned and persisted from the 6th to the 12th. Unsettled conditions again dominated, with frequent showers interspersed by good spells of sunshine. Thunderstorms and heavy spells of showery rain led to flooding problems in some locations on the 12th.

13th to 17th Largely dry with only isolated showers recorded during this period. Warm and sunny conditions dominated on the 13th and 14th, with temperatures reaching highs of around 22°C in places on the 14th. Cloudier conditions with only brief spells of sunshine returned on the 15th, 16th and 17th, causing temperatures to fall to values close to or slightly below average for the time of the year.

18th to 22nd Unsettled with bands of rain followed by scattered showers and sunny spells. A slight ground frost was recorded in isolated locations on the 18th, while by day maximum temperatures fell below average on the 19th and 20th. The 20th also proved largely dry and sunny across the province.

23rd to 27th Largely dry with only scattered showers recorded across the province on the 23rd, 24th and 27th. Above average temperatures were recorded on the 25th and 27th, with values reaching highs of around 23°C in many locations on the 27th, making this the warmest day of the month in most parts. Conditions were however quite cloudy with only brief spells of sunshine recorded on each of the dates during this spell.

29th to 31st Unsettled and dull with spells of often heavy and thundery rain leading to flooding problems in many parts during the morning of the 30th. By day temperatures fell below average, however by night conditions proved very mild, with values well above normal for the time of year.

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